



ACU Roster of Experts – Terms of Reference

Introduction and purpose

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) is seeking to grow and diversify its roster of experts – a call down list of staff within ACU member institutions who have expressed interest in participating in ACU-related activities.

The world's oldest university network, the ACU brings together a powerfully diverse group of over 400 member universities in more than 40 countries, representing a variety of cultural, environmental, socio-economic, and political contexts. This institutional membership in turn represents thousands of staff working across all academic disciplines and professional service roles.

The ACU mobilises this network to support its mission of building a better world through international collaboration in higher education. In the face of growing global challenges, it is increasingly important to upscale the breadth and depth of our understanding of our network to ensure we are able to best serve our members and support their contribution to society.

As such, the ACU wishes to channel the expertise of its membership into a variety of activities and programmes that support the contribution of higher education and research to societal development.

Overview of opportunity

The ACU roster of experts is a call down list of staff at ACU member institutions who have expertise and experience in areas of work that the ACU conducts activity in. The staff listed on the ACU roster of experts will have expressed interest in participating in ACU-related activity.

Recent examples of previous work include participating as a mentor, theme lead, training provider, or review panel member for the [Commonwealth Futures Climate Research Cohort](#). This programme has developed international, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary research partnerships and contributed to individual career progression through collaboration opportunities and academic esteem indicators. Other recent examples include participating as a consultant for the ACU contribution to the design of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and Canada International Development Research Centre (IDRC) [Climate Adaptation and Resilience](#) (CLARE) programme, as well as the development of the [ACU equitable research partnerships toolkit](#), and as steering group members and training providers for the [Partnership for Enhanced Blended Learning](#) (PEBL) programmes in East and West Africa.

Scope of Work

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the types of activity and thematic areas the ACU is calling for experts to contribute to:

Types of activity:

- providing knowledge to policymakers, such as through rapid evidence reviews, emerging issues reports, expert challenge sessions, etc.;
- academic mentorship for early career researchers;
- participating in review/selection panels for research programmes;
- academic supervision of early career researchers;
- creating learning products such as tool kits, infographics, etc.;
- delivering training for researchers and professional services staff;
- speaking opportunities.

Thematic areas:

- Agriculture and food insecurity;
- Climate change, nature and environment;
- Economic and private sector development, investment, and trade;
- Education;
- Foreign policy, geopolitics, and political economy;
- Governance, corruption, conflict, and peace building;
- Global public health;
- Humanitarian action and resilience to crises;
- Judicial and security sector reform;
- Public sector reform, public financial management and macroeconomic policy;
- Science, technology and innovation;
- Social protection;
- Serious organised crime;
- Women, girls, gender, and social inclusion;
- University administration expertise such as research support management, admissions, people management, fundraising, student services.

Please note the following important information:

- as a call down list, it is not guaranteed that a member of the roster will be contacted to participate in activities.
- deliverables, such as rapid evidence reviews, may be required at fairly short notice (e.g., delivered within 5 working days). Other activities may be over a much longer time period.
- Members of the roster have the right to decline a request before contracting has been conducted.

Eligibility

To be eligible to be included in the ACU roster of experts, you must be an employee of an ACU member institution. To find out whether your institution is a member of the ACU, please see [here](#). If, at any time, your institution is no longer a member of the ACU, you will no longer be eligible for work under these Terms of Reference. ACU reserves the right to request evidence of employment status, if appropriate and necessary to do so.

At ACU, we do not just accept difference — we celebrate it, we support it, and we thrive on it for the benefit of our employees, our services, and our community. ACU is proud to be an equal opportunity workplace and encourages expressions of interest for the roster of experts from all individuals regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

Funding / remuneration

Work conducted under this Terms of Reference may or may not be remunerated.

When a member of the roster is contacted about a potential activity, they will be informed whether the activity is remunerated. If the activity is remunerated, the member of the roster will be asked to provide a day rate in British Pounds Sterling (GBP).

How to register

In order to sign up, please complete the following [form](#).

There is no set deadline to complete the form, but we encourage you to register as soon as possible, as activities will open on a rolling basis.

If you have any questions, please contact: experts@acu.ac.uk

Selection

Selection of experts for activities as described above will be made (as and when needed) from the roster database, on the basis of selection criteria such as academic expertise and experience, geographical expertise requirements, gender balance, regular rotation, and absence of conflict of interest. Very good language skills (in particular in English) are required. The procedure will be objective and follow the principles of non-discrimination and equal treatment.

Contracting

If your expertise, experience, and expressed interest align with an activity the ACU is conducting, the ACU may contact you via email or telephone with a specific request for support, which will outline the task, the deliverables, the timeframe, and any associated remuneration (if applicable). If you agree to conduct the work, the ACU will contract you in one of two ways to deliver said work:

1. If the work is remunerated, you will enter into a consultancy agreement with the ACU.
2. If the work is not remunerated, you will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the ACU.

In both cases, once these documents have been signed and agreed, you will be required to meet your deliverables within the stated timeframe.

Data protection

During registration, data will be collected for the purpose of generating a call down list for potential participation in ACU-related activity. If you wish to opt out, you can contact us on experts@acu.ac.uk. Your data will be processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information on how we hold and process your data, including your individual rights, please see our [privacy notice](#).

Intellectual property

As standard, the ACU makes no claim to the intellectual property rights (IPR) arising from its programme activities and IPR generated by a programme will usually reside with the organisation(s) that generates it. However, the IPR policy of each contracted piece of work will be determined by the particular initiative being worked on. For example, if the ACU is contracted on an externally funded programme, we will be obligated to follow the IPR policy of the particular contract. All IPR related conditions will be clearly communicated and agreed upon during the contracting stage.

Safeguarding

The ACU is committed to safeguarding and has processes in place to ensure that all activities adhere to robust safeguarding policies and procedures. See the ACU Safeguarding Policy: <https://www.acu.ac.uk/media/4197/acu-safeguarding-policy-march-2022.pdf>. As part of the contracting stage for the delivery of work, roster members will be required to sign an agreement to adhere to safeguarding policies and procedures, which includes how to report concerns.